

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 VIENTI 04345 010826Z

47

ACTION SS-30

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /031 W

----- 114457

R 010600Z JUN 74

FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9267

INFO AMEMBASSY SAIGON

S E C R E T VIENTIANE 4345

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MCAP, LA

SUBJECT: NVA WITHDRAWAL

REFERENCE: A) STATE 114180

B) SAIGON 7128

C) VIENTIANE 4143

1. REFERENCE MESSAGES INDICATE I MAY HAVE FAILED TO COMMUNICATE INTENT IN REPORTING NVA WITHDRAWALS, VIENTIANE 4143. MY PURPOSES WERE TWOFOLD: 1) TO PROVIDE A FACTUAL BASIS ON WHICH WE MIGHT ALL AGREE AND NOT RPT NOT TO PRETEND THAT THE NVA HAD LEFT LAOS, AND 2) TO PUT FORWARD A SUGGESTED MANNER IN WHICH TO HANDLE AN ISSUE WHICH IS BOUND TO BECOME VERY LIVELY IN THE NEXT FEW WEEKS.

2. BASICALLY IT APPEARED TO ME THAT FOR THE U.S. TO TAKE THE LEAD AND CREATE A MAJOR ISSUE OVER THE CONTINUING PRESENCE OF NVA TROOPS IN LAOS WOULD BE SELF-DEFEATING. IT WOULD BE PERCEIVED BY THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY AS ANOTHER US/DRV SPITTING MATCH AND THEREFORE NOT ONE MERITING BECOMING INVOLVED IN. ON THE LAO SCENE IT WOULD HARDEN AN ISSUE WHICH WILL PROVE A CONTINUING HANDICAP TO ANY COOPERATION BETWEEN THE TWO SIDES. I DID NOT SUGGEST THAT WE SHOULD BE SILENT. INDEED, WE SHOULD NOT LET PEOPLE FORGET THIS DRV VIOLATION AND WE MUST PUBLICIZE IT. IT IS A MATTER OF HOW WE DO IT; NOT WHAT WE DO.

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3. AS FOR GENERAL SITUATION IN LAOS, WE TOO ARE CON-

CERNED BY ITS DRIFT, BUT NOT SURPRISED, SUCH WAS
INHERENT IN THE FORMATION OF PGNU. ONCE WE HAD RE-
NOUNCED MILITARY MEANS TO ACHIEVE OUR OBJECTIVES,
WE ACCEPTED THE RISKS INVOLVED IN A POLITICAL SOLUTION
AND THE CONSEQUENT LIMITATIONS ON POSSIBLE US
ACTIONS. IN THIS SITUATION WE MUST BE REALISTIC IF
WE ARE TO BE EFFECTIVE.

4. IN MY VIEW OUR OBJECTIVE IS TO MAINTAIN THE PRE-
SENT EQUILIBRIUM AND WE CAN BEST DO THIS BY ENLISTING
INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT. TO ATTAIN THIS SUPPORT IT IS
NECESSARY TO SHOW THAT US HAS ADOPTED MATURE AND
STEADY POSITION OF SUPPORTING A LAOS THAT IS TRULY
NEUTRAL AND TO AVOID FRUITLESS POLEMICS.
WHITEHOUSE

NOTE BY OC/T: EXDIS CAPTION ADDED PER MR. NEWLIN, S/S-O.

SECRET

NNN

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